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ABSTRACT

This report by Delaware's Governor and Secretary of Education, in consultation with the State Board of Education, sets forth a plan to improve professional standards and accountability in the Delaware school system. The report focuses on how Delaware can assure the quality of educators for its students, and thus raise student achievement. The premise of the report is that well-prepared, effective educators are critical to students' success. In fact, teacher effectiveness and class size together have been found to have a greater impact on student academic achievement than poverty, race, and parental educational level combined. The report focuses on three main issues: assuring the quality of teacher candidates, recruiting top educators, and supporting professional growth to ensure the effectiveness of educators throughout their careers. The report addresses the three issues in six sections: "Teacher Skills Requirements"; "Professional Development" (New Teachers, Experienced Teachers); "Evaluation of Professional Educators"; "Professional Educators' Licensure and Recertification"; "Other Certified Staff"; and "Administrator Employment Practices." For each section of the report, a summary of the issues is provided with recommendations. The report also supports certain recommendations from the Statewide Educator Recruitment Committee and the Education Salary Schedule Improvement Committee. Three additional committees also provided information for the development of the report. A list of 11 supporting documents that are available upon request is provided. (SM)

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**A REPORT ON
INCREASING PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS
FOR DELAWARE'S EDUCATORS**

**Thomas R. Carper
Governor**

and

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Secretary of Education**

February 1999

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
I. INTRODUCTION: EDUCATION REFORM IN DELAWARE	7
II. FORMAT OF THE REPORT	8
III. TEACHER SKILLS REQUIREMENTS.....	8
A. Teacher Preparation Programs and Requirements.....	8
B. Teacher Recruitment	10
IV. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	11
A. New Teachers.....	11
B. Experienced Teachers	12
V. EVALUATION OF PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS	13
VI. PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS' LICENSURE AND RECERTIFICATION ..	15
VII. OTHER CERTIFICATED STAFF	17
VIII. ADMINISTRATOR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES.....	18
IX. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION	19

Executive Summary

In accordance with the Educational Accountability Act of 1998, the following report sets forth a plan to improve professional standards and accountability in the Delaware school system. The report focuses on how Delaware can assure the quality of educators for Delaware's students and as a result, raise student achievement.

Although this report and that of the Education Salary Schedule Improvement Committee were developed separately, the two are closely related. Issues of professional development and accountability must necessarily be linked to issues of professional compensation. If we are to ask more and expect more from our teachers, then we must be prepared to compensate them for their additional hard work.

The premise of this report is that well-prepared, effective educators are critical to students' success. In fact, teacher effectiveness and class size together have been found to have a greater impact on student academic growth than poverty, race, and parental education level combined. However, the purpose of this report is not to blame educators for poor achieving students. Too often educators receive unfair criticism and a lack of appreciation for their dedication to educating Delaware's children. We believe in our educators and their ability to meet the raised bar for achievement.

I. TEACHER SKILLS REQUIREMENTS

The basis for teacher effectiveness in the classroom begins with solid undergraduate preparation and aggressive recruitment of well-qualified teacher candidates. The Department of Education and the State Board of Education currently approve Delaware college and university teacher preparation programs. Delaware schools districts now have the ability to recruit and make early offers of employment. The following recommendations will enhance teacher preparation at the undergraduate level and aggressive recruitment strategies in Delaware.

A. Teacher Skills Requirements

1. Reform the current Department of Education approval process of in-state college and university teacher preparation programs. The Department of Education must ensure that the Delaware content and teachers standards are integral part of teacher preparation programs.
2. Require accreditation for teacher education programs by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) or a comparable accreditation process.
3. Require PRAXIS II as part of the licensure process in Delaware. (PRAXIS II measures essential skills in the specific content areas to be taught.) Establish passing scores for all PRAXIS II tests that the State will use.

B. Teacher Recruitment

1. Support the Education Salary Schedule Improvement Committee recommendations to raise starting teacher salaries and to provide additional professional development resources. The Governor's Fiscal Year 2000 Recommended Budget includes \$10.8 million for these initiatives.
2. Form a Delaware Recruitment Consortium to continue the recruitment of high-quality teachers. The Governor's Fiscal Year 2000 Recommended Budget includes \$50,000 to support this initiative.
3. Expand alternative routes to certification for adults who are interested in teaching middle and high school students. The Governor's Fiscal Year 2000 Recommended Budget includes \$79,200 to increase the number of candidates in the program.

II. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development must develop the skills that educators need in implementing the Delaware reform initiatives. To accomplish this, we recommend the following.

1. Initiate an induction process during the initial licensure phase for new teachers that includes mentoring by experienced teachers and a portfolio process linked to the Delaware Performance Appraisal System (DPAS).
2. Support the Education Salary Schedule Improvement Committee's recommendation to phase in five additional days for professional development over the next three years. The Governor's Fiscal Year 2000 Recommended Budget includes resources for one additional day. The Committee recommends a phasing in of four additional professional development days during Fiscal Year 2001 and Fiscal Year 2002.
3. Increase the flexibility of existing State professional development funds to local districts.
4. Adopt the National Staff Development Council standards for professional development.

III. EVALUATION OF PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS

The purpose of an evaluation system is to ensure that Delaware has the most effective teachers in the classroom. The evaluation system must be closely tied to a professional development system so that all teachers have the opportunity to increase their skills and knowledge. To this end, we recommend the following.

1. Develop a revised Delaware Performance Appraisal System (DPAS) during the next two years that utilizes the Delaware Teacher standards adopted in 1998.

2. Revise DPAS to include evidence of student achievement as 20 percent of the evaluation. Student achievement will be defined as "student growth" so that a teacher's students must be able to demonstrate that they have learned over the past year. The Department of Education will develop guidelines and criteria for defining and measuring student academic growth annually. Local districts shall develop and implement evaluation plans within the Department of Education guidelines.
3. The Department of Education shall establish guidelines for loss of licensure and a fair appeal process.

IV. PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS' LICENSURE AND RECERTIFICATION

The current licensure and recertification process is not aligned with standards-based education and does not include a sufficient emphasis on professional development to strengthen the skills and knowledge of Delaware's educators. We propose to revise the licensure and licensure renewal (recertification) process to more clearly reflect standards-based education and the importance of professional development.

1. Institute rigorous licensure and recertification requirements through a three-tiered licensure system that includes requirements for professional development.

Initial License: This license, valid for up to three years, comprises the induction process for new teachers. It will include mentoring by an experienced teacher and completion of a portfolio. To enter the next licensure stage, a teacher must receive annual satisfactory Delaware Performance Appraisal (DPAS) evaluations.

Continuing License: This license is valid for five years. To hold a continuing license, a teacher must receive annual satisfactory DPAS evaluations and complete 150 hours (equivalent to a three-credit course per year) of professional development every five years. To renew the license, a teacher must meet these requirements every five years.

Advanced License: This license is valid for ten years. To be certified with an advanced license, a teacher must have earned National Board Certification and receive satisfactory DPAS evaluations. To renew the advanced license every ten years, an educator must successfully complete National Board recertification requirements or complete 300 hours (equivalent to a three-credit course per year) of professional development every ten years and receive annual satisfactory DPAS evaluations.

V. OTHER CERTIFICATED PERSONNEL

Although this report focuses primarily on teachers, it is our intent to develop a parallel accountability system for other certificated personnel, such as counselors, librarians/media specialists, nurses, and psychologists. Although the classroom teacher has the most direct effect on student achievement, others in the school must share in that responsibility.

The accountability system for other certificated personnel must include the same components as the teacher system: higher standards for preparation programs, a focus on skills necessary to contribute both to individual student and overall school achievement, coordinated and thoughtful professional development, and a meaningful evaluation process that includes student achievement. To that end, we recommend the development of a parallel system that takes into account the unique responsibilities of these professions. The following recommendations will be addressed.

1. Review standards that exist nationally for other certificated personnel and adapt them as appropriate for Delaware.
2. Review related examinations and licensure requirements and consider adaptation and/or adoption.
3. Support the work of the Education Salary Schedule Improvement Committee as it is reconstituted to consider compensation for other certificated personnel.
4. Revise the Delaware Performance Appraisal System to include evidence of student achievement as 20 percent of the evaluation. Student achievement will be defined as "student growth." The Department of Education will develop guidelines and criteria for defining and measuring student academic growth. Local districts shall develop and implement evaluation plans within the Department of Education guidelines.
5. Adopt the National Staff Development Council standards to provide guidance to schools and districts on the best way to focus professional development for other certificated personnel.

VI. ADMINISTRATOR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

It is also our intent to develop an equally rigorous, parallel system for administrators based upon Delaware's Administrator Standards. Administrators must have the necessary knowledge and skills to be effective instructional leaders. The administrator system must include higher standards for preparation programs, a focus upon administrative skills, professional support, coordinated and thoughtful professional development, and an evaluation process that includes student achievement measures.

While the administrator system can parallel the teacher system, it cannot be identical. There are elements that are unique to each profession. The following recommendations are for those areas that diverge from the teacher system.

1. Assist the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium with its efforts to develop examinations for administrators (similar to the PRAXIS exams for teachers).
2. Support the work of the Education Salary Schedule Improvement Committee when it is reconstituted to consider the issue of administrator compensation.

3. Revise the Delaware Performance Appraisal System to include evidence of student achievement that will comprise 30 percent of the evaluation. Student achievement is to be defined as "student growth," that is, students must be able to demonstrate that they have made increases in achievement over the past year. The Department of Education will develop guidelines and criteria for defining and measuring student academic growth. Local districts shall develop and implement evaluation plans within the Department of Education guidelines.
4. Adopt the National Staff Development Council standards to provide guidance to schools and districts on the best way to focus professional development for administrators. Consider the proposals in the upcoming report by the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium on professional development recommendations for administrators.

VII. CONCLUSION

This report is another step in the effort to improve public education in Delaware. Its purpose is not only to meet the requirements of the Educational Accountability Act of 1998, but to enhance our current system in assuring the quality of teacher candidates, recruiting top educators for our students, and supporting professional growth to assure the effectiveness of educators throughout their careers.

I. INTRODUCTION: EDUCATION REFORM IN DELAWARE

In accordance with the Education Accountability Act of 1998, the Governor and Secretary of Education, in consultation with the State Board of Education, submit this report that presents a plan for professional accountability. The goal of the plan is to develop a framework designed to improve the performance of Delaware's public school educators and, as a result, raise student achievement.

Since 1992, efforts to improve student achievement in Delaware have been focused on four major components: content standards, student assessments, instructional support necessary to give all students an equal opportunity to learn, and system accountability. First, content standards were developed to determine what students should know and be able to do in order to compete in an expanding economy.

Second, we developed the Delaware Student Testing Program for students in grades 3, 5, 8, and 10 in mathematics, science, English language arts, and social studies. The Education Accountability Act of 1998 created an accountability system for students, schools, and districts linked to student achievement on the Delaware Student Testing Program. Lastly, there has been an ongoing effort to ensure that a comprehensive system is in place to give all our students an equal opportunity to learn and succeed.

A variety of steps have been taken to create instructional support throughout the educational system. The Committee to Improve Parental and Family Involvement in Education, chaired by Lieutenant Governor Ruth Ann Minner, has worked closely with the Congress of Parents and Teachers and the Department of Education to adapt the Parent's Declaration of Parental Responsibilities and distribute it to each public school student in the state. Delaware is also investing in professional and staff development activities, parenting education, early childhood education for all low income children, extra instructional time for struggling students, discipline programs in every school, computer technology for every classroom, and class size reduction in the early grades.

The State has also recognized the importance of working with site-based staff in making decisions about the best use of funds to serve the needs of children in individual schools. Legislation has established funding for school-based grants toward site-based shared decision making. Such grants underscore the importance of supporting site-based shared decision making and the work that many districts have done to train school boards, district administrators, and local school staff in effective practices for such decision making.

Delaware has also recently become a member of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). SREB offers comprehensive information to the Department of Education and school districts about reform and effective school models, such as the High Schools That Work program.

The Department of Education has developed a Consolidated Plan and Application process designed to facilitate the school improvement process. Districts and schools must now examine how to utilize all sources of funding to improve student achievement. The application requires districts to set goals for student achievement and to examine data and factors related to student achievement in making decisions on program and instructional investments.

However, the most important support a student needs to learn and succeed is an effective teacher. Linda Darling-Hammond and Deborah Loewenberg Ball, nationally-known researchers on teacher effectiveness, clearly describe this relationship in their recent report published jointly by the Consortium for Policy Research in Education and the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future:

Reforms, we have learned over and over again, are rendered effective or ineffective by the knowledge, skills, and commitment of those working in the schools. Without know-how and buy-in, innovations do not succeed. Neither can they succeed without appropriate supports, including time, materials, and opportunities to learn. Furthermore, studies discover again and again that teacher expertise is one of the most important factors in determining student achievement ... *What teachers know and can do is crucial to what students learn.*

II. FORMAT OF THE REPORT

The framework developed for this report focuses on three main issues:

1. Assuring the quality of teacher candidates;
2. Recruiting top educators; and
3. Supporting professional growth to assure the effectiveness of educators throughout their careers.

The report addresses the above issues in six major sections: Teacher Skills Requirements, Professional Development, Evaluation of Professional Educators, Professional Educators' Licensure and Recertification, Other Certificated Personnel, and Administrator Employment Practices. For each section of this report, a summary of the issues is provided with recommendations.

The report also supports certain recommendations from the Statewide Educator Recruitment Committee and the Education Salary Schedule Improvement Committee. Three additional committees, the Accountability Advisory Committee, the Vision Task Force, and the Professional Development Task Force also provided information for the development of this report.

III. TEACHER SKILLS REQUIREMENTS

A. Teacher Preparation Programs and Requirements

Teachers must be able to meet the demands of an increasingly diverse student body and to effectively teach the knowledge and skills that students need to succeed in a new system of accountability. High expectations for students, schools, and school districts are the cornerstone of an accountability system. The new system must be comprehensive in assisting and supporting educators throughout their careers. Teacher preparation programs are an important component to making sure educators have the necessary tools to work in this profession.

Teacher candidates need to be measured not only in terms of college degrees and course requirements, but also with respect to the skills and knowledge needed to teach in Delaware's classrooms.

States have found that including teacher performance as a measure for initial licensure assists in (1) increasing the probability that every beginning teacher licensed by the State will be of high quality, (2) increasing public credibility regarding teacher quality, and (3) improving the content and rigor of teacher preparation programs.

The following recommendations and actions outline ways to raise standards for the approval of in-state teacher education programs and for educator candidates from other states. The recommendations also address streamlining the licensure process for candidates.

1. Reform the current Department of Education process for approval of in-state higher education teacher preparation programs. The Department of Education must ensure that the Delaware content standards and the ability of teacher candidates to teach in the classroom are integral parts of teacher preparation programs.
2. Require accreditation for teacher education programs by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) or a comparable accreditation process.
3. Require a published profile for in-state universities and colleges similar those that Delaware publishes for K-12 schools and districts. Information should include average SAT scores of students in their teacher preparation programs, passing rate on PRAXIS assessments, and other important information recommended by the Department of Education. The federal government has mandated such profiles in the latest Federal Higher Education Act.
4. Re-evaluate the passing scores for PRAXIS I in reading, writing, and mathematics. Delaware's current passing scores compare favorably to other states that require PRAXIS I. Require that all teacher candidates pass PRAXIS I, or a state approved equivalent test, before Delaware will grant an initial license.
5. Require PRAXIS II as part of the licensure process in Delaware. PRAXIS II measures essential skills in the specific content areas to be taught. During the next two years, establish passing scores for all PRAXIS II tests that the State will utilize.
6. Actively pursue regional agreements for licensure reciprocity with Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. Currently, teachers in surrounding states who want to teach in Delaware face a complex and time-consuming process. If reciprocal agreements can be established, it will be easier for well-qualified teachers to come to Delaware.
7. Initiate DEEDS (Delaware Educator Data System), a computer application database system designed to store licensure information, including completion of State-approved professional development, in a more efficient and effective manner than the current system. DEEDS is currently being piloted at the Department of Education and will be extended to the districts in the summer of 1999.

B. Teacher Recruitment

As Delaware increases the skill and knowledge requirements for new teachers, the State must attract the best and the brightest individuals into the teaching profession. Delaware is facing several challenges in the recruitment of top educators. A brief overview of the issues is summarized below.

1. It is estimated that approximately 40 percent of teachers will become eligible for some type of retirement during the next five years.
2. The Class Size Reduction Act of 1998 lowered the student-to-teacher ratio; thereby increasing the total number of Kindergarten through Grade 3 teachers needed in Delaware.
3. Smaller school districts with lower local salary supplements may experience difficulty in attracting candidates. Also, recruitment may become more difficult in the near future because surrounding states are beginning to offer bonuses and incentives to attract teachers.
4. Delaware needs to increase the diversity of its educational staff composition by recruiting educators of color, educators who speak a language other than English or who know sign language, and educators with accommodated disabilities.

The following actions and recommendations outline ways to enhance teacher recruitment.

1. Support the Education Salary Schedule Improvement Committee recommendations to raise teachers starting salaries, lengthen the work year for teachers to allow more time for professional development, focus on professional development activities that are eligible for salary credits, and increase the value of school-based awards. The Governor's Fiscal Year 2000 Recommended Budget includes \$10.8 million for year one of a three-year plan developed by the Committee.
2. Provide grants to Delaware high schools, including adult high schools that agree to establish and operate high-quality Future Educators of America student organizations (FEA Chapters). This issue should be coordinated with the Education Salary Improvement Committee as it is reconstituted in the Spring of 1999.
3. Develop an incentive package, including scholarships, to recruit new teachers. Review existing scholarship programs to determine if changes are necessary. This issue should be coordinated with the Education Salary Schedule Improvement Committee as it is reconstituted in the Spring of 1999.
4. Form a Delaware Recruitment Consortium of school district personnel officers and Department of Education staff to assist in statewide activities to recruit high-quality teachers, particularly for Delaware's smaller school districts and for the teacher shortage areas. The Fiscal Year 2000 Governor's Recommended Budget includes \$50,000 to support this effort.

5. Expand alternative routes to certification for adults who wish to transition into the fields of middle and high school education from other careers and for paraprofessionals already working in education. The Fiscal Year 2000 Governor's Recommended Budget includes \$79,200 to increase the number of candidates in the present program.
6. Develop a uniform Delaware teacher employment application, available electronically, that all districts will accept. Also, utilize the Internet to post job vacancies and maintain well-qualified applicants' résumés.
7. Consider signing bonuses for fully certified new teachers who teach in schools with high percentages of low achieving students and/or a high poverty rate or who teach more than 70 percent of their day in teacher shortage areas. The Education Salary Schedule Improvement Committee should consider this recommendation as well as other incentives to recruit teachers to Delaware.
8. Encourage school districts to use the opportunity to make "early job offers" of employment to highly qualified applicants, an opportunity made possible by the Guaranteed Unit Count legislation.

IV. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Providing support during the first years of teaching and focused professional development for all teachers will increase the knowledge and skills that teachers need to help their students succeed. The State recognizes the importance of professional development funding and has committed millions of dollars on an annual basis to enhance professional development activities for educators in Delaware. Currently, professional development accounts for approximately 3.0 percent of the total budget for public education. For Fiscal Year 2000, the Governor's Recommended Budget includes an additional \$1.5 million for several different professional development initiatives. Financial resources, coupled with system supports, are critical to the success of new and experienced educators.

The following actions and recommendations outline ways to increase professional development for new and experienced teachers.

A. New Teachers

1. Establish an induction process, from two to four years, during which beginning teachers will work with experienced teachers trained as content-specific mentors. The mentor will work with the new teacher to develop skills in classroom management, time management, and content-specific teaching skills. The State of Delaware has a budget of \$480,000 for teacher mentoring. The Fiscal Year 2000 Governor's Recommended Budget includes a \$120,000 increase. Mentoring is an important component of the induction years.
2. Require a content-specific portfolio that will be used to document the teacher's progress and improvement over time. The portfolio will be evaluated by trained assessors and may include, but is not limited to, units of study, videotaped lessons, and teacher classroom

assessments. If the portfolio is positively evaluated at the end of the second year of teaching, the teacher will receive a continuing license. If needed, the beginning teacher should have a third year with additional mentoring and submit a portfolio for evaluation at the end of this third year. If at the end of the third year a beginning teacher has not received a positive evaluation of the revised portfolio, the district may grant the teacher an extension for a fourth and final year. The Department of Education will develop guidelines for training assessors and the portfolio evaluation process.

B. Experienced Teachers

Professional development for experienced educators is necessary to assist them in continuing to improve their skills and to develop new skills and knowledge with regard to "best practices." It also provides the platform for developing a thorough understanding of current reform initiatives.

1. Implement the recommendations of the Education Salary Schedule Improvement Committee to phase in five additional days for professional development over three years. In the Fiscal Year 2000 Governor's Recommended Budget, funding is recommended for one additional professional development day. The Committee recommends a phasing in of four additional professional development days during Fiscal Year 2001 and Fiscal Year 2002.
2. Adopt the National Staff Development Council standards. These standards will guide Delaware in planning, approving, delivering, evaluating, and funding professional development.
3. Increase the flexibility of current professional development funding. For Fiscal Year 1999, the Professional Accountability Block Grant is \$5.8 million. Consider combining additional professional development funds into a flexible funding pool and then allocate funds on a per teacher basis to each school district. The school districts will then use these funds to develop an effective professional development system. State funds shall not supplant existing local funds used for professional development.
4. Provide access to distance learning opportunities through courses provided over the Internet by in-state higher education institutions and the Southern Regional Electronic Campus (SREC). The SREC is a "marketplace" of programs, courses, and services that are available through technology. Educators would be able to search for professional development that meets their needs.
5. The Department of Education shall coordinate the establishment of a Professional Development Collaborative comprised of local districts and organizations that offer professional development. This partnership will develop ways of delivering professional development in a more efficient and effective way. The Collaborative will also examine current teacher resource centers that exist throughout Delaware. The Collaborative will also consider the possibility of expanding existing centers and/or the need for additional countywide resource centers.

V. EVALUATION OF PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS

Recent research studies conclude an effective teacher is the most significant factor in student achievement. The purpose of the Delaware Performance Appraisal System (DPAS) is to ensure that Delaware has highly effective teachers in the classrooms. DPAS must be closely tied to a professional development system so that all teachers have the opportunity to increase their skills and knowledge.

The following is recommended for the revision of Delaware Performance Appraisal System (DPAS) during the next two years.

1. The alignment of DPAS with the Delaware Teacher standards is the first step in designing a professional accountability system that will promote high teacher performance and student achievement. Teachers need to be clear about Delaware's academic expectations for its students. Teachers also need to be clear about the planning, instruction, classroom management, and assessments that will promote student academic growth toward these expectations.
2. The appraisal system must be consistent with the teacher's experience and placement in the licensure system. A "one size fits all" concept is inconsistent with a standards-based licensure system that has demanding requirements for licensure renewal (recertification).
3. Revise DPAS to include evidence of student achievement as 20 percent of the evaluation. Student achievement will be defined as "student growth" so that a teacher's students must be able to demonstrate that they have learned over the past year. The Department of Education will develop guidelines and criteria for defining and measuring student academic growth annually. Local districts shall develop and implement evaluation plans within the Department of Education guidelines.
4. The Department of Education shall establish guidelines for loss of licensure. If an educator receives an unsatisfactory evaluation, intensive intervention efforts and an individual improvement plan will be developed. Two consecutive unsatisfactory evaluations will result in the loss of licensure. The Department of Education shall establish guidelines for an appeal process to resolve disputes.

**Proposal for a Standards-Based, Revised
Delaware Performance Appraisal System (DPAS)**

Elements	License		
	Initial	Continuing	Advanced
Standards	Delaware Teacher Standards		
Sources of Evidence	❖ Portfolio to be completed at the end of the induction period.		
	❖ Multiple measures, such as: observations, unit plans, case studies, work with parents and the community, and professional development. ❖ Evidence must include measures of student academic growth. Such documentation will count for at least 20 percent of the appraisal for teachers.		
Appraisers	Building or district administrator.	Building or district administrator with input from peers.	Review team with building or district administrator accepting or verifying recommendations of team.
Right of Fair Dismissal	As currently defined by 14 Del. C., Chapter 14, Section 1410 (b).	Amend 14 Del. C., Chapter 14 to give school districts the right to terminate educators based on the loss of their professional license subject to two consecutive unsatisfactory appraisals that include measures of student performance.	

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VI. PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS' LICENSURE AND RECERTIFICATION

There is general agreement that while a sound licensure system can ensure that all teachers meet rigorous entry-level expectations, an incentive system that encourages teachers to extend their capabilities throughout their careers can be an effective way to develop exceptional teacher leaders. Content and teaching strategies are constantly changing as are the nature and needs of students in Delaware schools. It is imperative that all teachers, new and experienced, remain current with the knowledge and skills associated with their profession.

The following recommendations will raise the expectations for teacher candidates and will ensure that teachers continue to stay current in their profession.

1. Institute a three-tiered, standards-based licensure system.

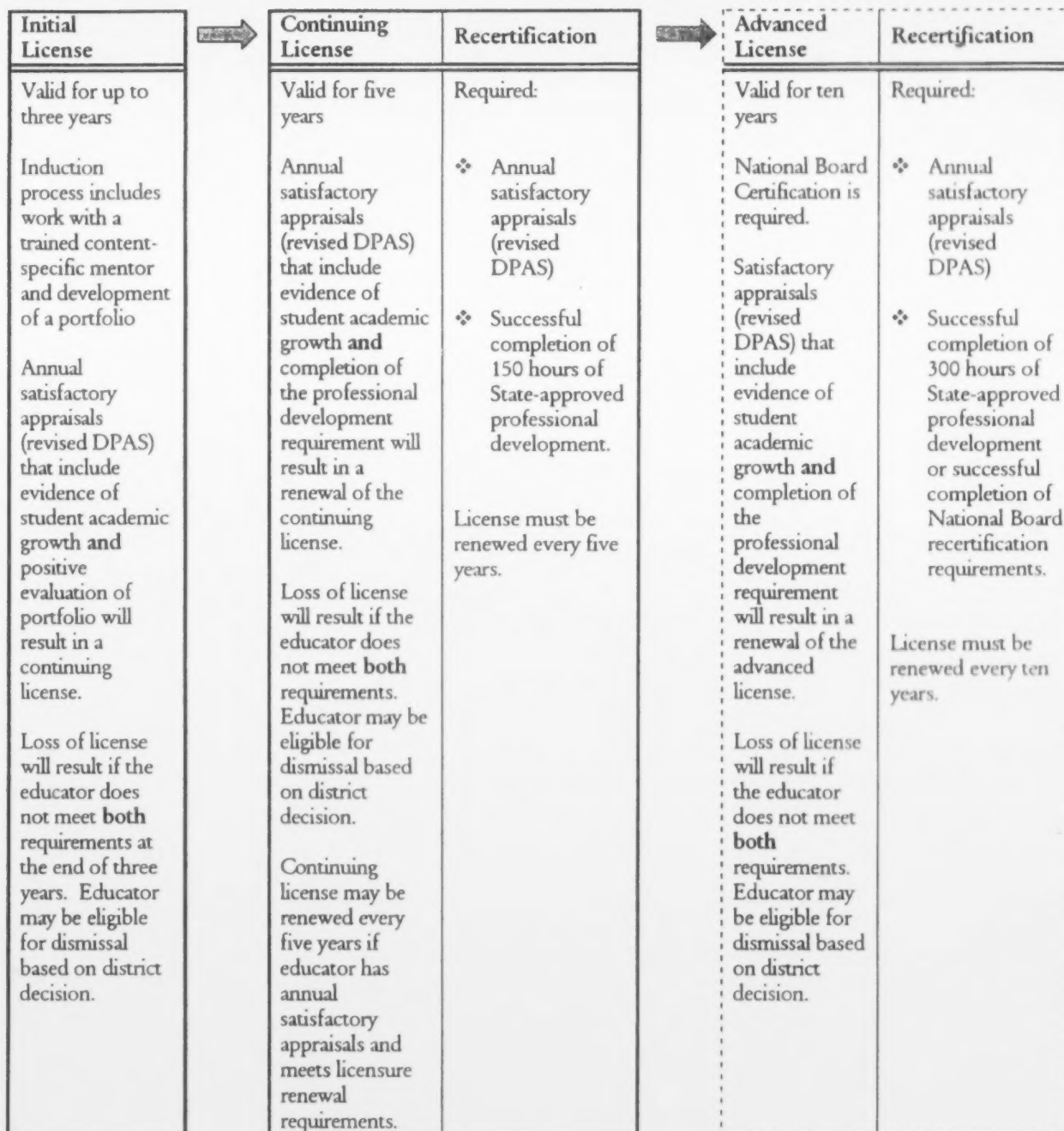
Initial License: Valid for up to three years, this license would be used during the teacher induction period. To advance to the next licensure stage, the teacher must have annual satisfactory appraisals (revised DPAS) and have successfully completed a portfolio. The induction period will also include mentoring by an experienced teacher.

Continuing License: Valid for five years, this license is initially earned after the induction period and can be continually renewed if the educator has annual satisfactory appraisals (revised DPAS) and has completed 150 hours of approved professional development. Teachers do not have to progress to the advanced license. Teachers may continue to renew their continuing license if they successfully complete the licensure renewal requirements.

Advanced License: Valid for ten years, some educators may choose to progress to this license upon successful completion of the requirements for maintaining a continuing license. Only educators with National Board Certification will be eligible for an advanced license. To renew the advanced license every ten years, an educator must successfully complete National Board recertification requirements or complete 300 hours (equivalent to a three-credit course per year) of professional development and receive annual satisfactory DPAS evaluations.

2. Create a mechanism for regaining a license if an educator loses it due to two consecutive unsatisfactory appraisals and/or failure to meet the recertification requirements.
3. Adopt the recommendations in the Education Salary Schedule Improvement Committee report. Specifically, provide salary supplements for teachers who engage in State-approved professional development that improves their skills and knowledge. Professional development activities may include but are not limited to college-level coursework, inservice, curriculum development, and school leadership. Also, provide supplements for temporary additional responsibility assignments such as mentor or curriculum developer.

Proposal for a Standards-Based Licensure System



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4. Additional recommendations to increase professional accountability follow.

- a. Expand the information reported in Delaware School and District Profiles to include information on professional accountability. The Department should consider including such information as: the number/percent of classes taught by teachers who have a major or minor in the subject(s) that they are currently teaching, the number/percent of educators at each licensure level, and the percent of teachers teaching in their certified area(s). Legal counsel will review confidentiality issues related to reporting information in the profiles.
- b. Develop a professional development approval mechanism that involves the identification of statewide professional development priorities that will be submitted to the Secretary of Education and specified during the annual budget process. The summary report of the Education Salary Schedule Improvement Committee makes this recommendation as well. The Department must also align the evaluation and approval of professional development with the National Staff Development Council standards.

VII. OTHER CERTIFICATED STAFF

A commitment to providing Delaware's students with the best education resides not only with the teacher, but also with other certificated staff and administrators. Other certificated staff (such as nurses, librarians, media specialists, nurses, and psychologists) must have the necessary knowledge and skills to engage in the task of ensuring students' success in school. Although the classroom teacher has the most direct effect on student achievement, others in the school must share in the responsibility.

The accountability system for other certificated personnel must include the same components as the teacher system: higher standards for preparation programs, a focus on skills and knowledge necessary to contribute to both individual student and overall school achievement, coordinated and thoughtful professional development, and a meaningful evaluation process that includes student achievement measures.

A parallel system that takes into account the unique responsibilities of these professions will be developed. The following are recommendations for this system.

1. Review standards that exist nationally for other certificated personnel and adapt them as appropriate for Delaware.
2. Review related examinations and licensure requirements and consider adaptation and/or adoption.
3. Support the work of the Education Salary Schedule Improvement Committee as it is reconstituted to consider compensation for other certificated personnel.

4. Revise the Delaware Performance Appraisal System to include evidence of student achievement as 20 percent of the evaluation. Student achievement will be defined as "student growth." The Department of Education will develop guidelines and criteria for defining and measuring student growth. Local districts shall develop and implement evaluation plans within the Department of Education guidelines.
5. Adopt the National Staff Development Council standards to provide guidance to schools and districts on the best way to focus professional development for other certificated personnel.

VIII. ADMINISTRATOR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

Administrators must have the necessary knowledge and skills to be effective instructional leaders. Although this report focuses primarily on teachers, it is our intent to develop an equally rigorous, parallel system for administrators based upon Delaware's Administrator Standards.

The administrator accountability system must include higher standards for preparation programs, a focus upon administrator skills, coordinated and thoughtful professional development, and a meaningful evaluation process that includes student achievement measures. Additionally, Delaware will require and provide training for administrators in using the revised DPAS. The State will also provide training and coordinate with mentors in evaluating portfolios.

Naturally, the administrator system can parallel the teacher system, but the two cannot be identical. There are elements that are unique to each profession. The following recommendations are for those areas in which the administrator system will diverge from the teacher system.

1. Assist the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium with its efforts developing examinations for administrators (similar to the PRAXIS exams for teachers).
2. Support the work of the Education Salary Schedule Improvement Committee when it is reconstituted to consider the issue of administrator compensation.
3. Revise the Delaware Performance Appraisal System to include evidence of student achievement that will count for 30 percent of the evaluation. Student achievement is to be defined as "student growth;" that is, students must be able to demonstrate that they have made increases in achievement over the past year. The Department of Education will develop guidelines for defining and measuring student academic growth.
4. Adopt the National Staff Development Council standards to provide guidance to schools and districts on the best way to focus professional development for administrators. Consider the proposals in the upcoming report by the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium on professional development recommendations for administrators.

IX. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Eleven supporting documents are available for review. If you wish to have a copy of any or each of these, please contact Dr. Patricia Bigelow at the Department of Education, 302-739-2767.

- A. Glossary of Terms Used in the Report
- B. Committee Membership and Charges
- C. Relevant Legislation
- D. National Standards for Staff Development
- E. National Board Certification
- F. Standards for Teaching in the SREB States
- G. PRAXIS I and PRAXIS II: Comparative Data
- H. Delaware Administrator Standards
- I. Delaware Professional Teaching Standards
- J. Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC): Standards for School Leaders.
- K. Key Beliefs and Operational Definitions for Professional Development